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BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

I.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A RUSSIAN SOLDIER.

ALEXANDER VERESTCHAGIN is not widely known to fame, but he is entitled to thanks for the very interesting, though rather lengthy and sometimes tedious, story of his life and adventures as a well-born Russian and soldier.* The first part of this book is taken up with an account of the author's childhood and youth; the second with his adventures as an *aide* to the impetuous Skobeloff in the late Danubian war; the third part furnishes us with some particulars of the Tekke expedition formed for the reduction of a trans-Caspian tribe of Turcomans who had proved themselves valiant and troublesome foes of Russia in her dispute with Turkey about the provinces. The reader will derive a great deal of information from these pages about Russian people and Russian ways of fighting. The author does not pose as a celebrity, on the contrary, he sometimes rather needlessly belittles himself, and writes very modestly of his personal achievements. By reading such books as this one gets a better idea of a foreign country and people than many persons could do by months of travel; hence there is a value to a truthfully descriptive and ingenious work of this order far exceeding the intrinsic worth of the facts recorded.

II.

MISCELLANEOUS.

HOWARD SEELY—whether a genuine name or *nom de plume* we know not—writes a pleasant story,† in which some features of Western frontier life are vividly sketched. The author is evidently a keen and close observer. This fact, indeed, gives the greatest value and interest to the book, for the plot and plan of the story are both weak and commonplace. A gentleman ranchman somewhere out on the Colorado River, falls in by accident with a pretty and pert maiden, the untutored and unsophisticated daughter of an old settler. The girl speaks frontier language, and is charmingly ignorant of conventionalities, but is a girl of pluck and daring, and her attractions are sufficient in our hero's eyes to make him break off an incipient courtship with a fascinating young lady of his own social class. The author's literary tact and skill are shown in the purely descriptive passages, such as the turkey hunt on the Texas prairie, and the murder trial before Judge Pemberton and a jury of the town of Oskalo, which are faithful and character-

* "At Home and in War. 1853-1881." Reminiscences and Anecdotes. By Alexander Verestchagin. Translated by Isabel Hapgood. T. Y. Crowell & Co.

† "A Nymph of the West." A novel. By Howard Seely. D. Appleton & Co.